

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesperson

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For Immediate Release

MEDIA NOTE

December 3, 2014

Joint Statement Issued by Partners at the Counter-ISIL Coalition Ministerial Meeting

1. Sixty partners met at the invitation of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry for substantive deliberations at the first ministerial-level plenary session for the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Brussels, Belgium. (ISIL is hereafter also referred to by its Arabic acronym, Daesh). Prime Minister of Iraq Haider al-Abadi, President Barack Obama's Special Envoy to the Coalition General John Allen, and distinguished representatives from Coalition partners also addressed this important plenary meeting, offering updates on Coalition progress and benchmarks for the coming months.

2. Coalition partners reaffirmed their commitment to work together under a common, multifaceted, and long-term strategy to degrade and defeat ISIL/Daesh. Participants decided that the efforts of the global coalition should focus on multiple lines of effort:

1. Supporting military operations, capacity building, and training;
2. Stopping the flow of foreign terrorist fighters;
3. Cutting off ISIL/Daesh's access to financing and funding;
4. Addressing associated humanitarian relief and crises; and
5. Exposing ISIL/Daesh's true nature (ideological delegitimization).

3. Participants noted that all members of the Coalition are contributing along one or more of these lines of effort, and decided to continue and intensify these contributions, according to their national decisions, capabilities, and priorities.

4. They further commended the leadership role taken by Coalition partners to integrate cooperation along the lines of effort, to include Kuwait, which hosted a conference on countering ISIL/Daesh's message (Line of Effort 5) on October 28, 2014; Bahrain, which hosted a conference on countering terrorist finance (Line of Effort 3) on November 9, 2014; and Morocco, which will host the first meeting of the Global Counterterrorism Forum foreign terrorist fighters working group on December 15, 2014. They further noted the successful coalition coordination conference held at U.S. Central Command Headquarters from November 12-21, 2014, attended by over 200 planners from 33 Coalition partner nations.

5. Participants noted that the global campaign against ISIL/Daesh is beginning to show results. The ISIL/Daesh advance across Syria and into Iraq is being halted. Iraqi forces and Kurdistan Regional Government forces, with support from Coalition airstrikes, are now reclaiming territory in Iraq. Participants commended the efforts of the Lebanese Armed Forces in fighting ISIL/Daesh, and noted that ISIL/Daesh's finances and recruitment are also increasingly being challenged through international cooperation. Participants affirmed, however, that a successful campaign against ISIL/Daesh will take time, and will require a sustained, united, and coordinated response. Participants reiterated their long-term commitment to this effort.

6. Participants affirmed their unwavering commitment to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 and 2178 and in particular the provisions on combating the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, suppressing the financing of ISIL/Daesh and other terrorist groups, and exposing the violent ideology espoused by ISIL/Daesh around the world. Regional organizations can play an important role to support the implementation of these objectives. Participants further commended Arab League Resolution 7804 (September 7, 2014), the Jeddah Communiqué (September 11, 2014), the Paris Statement (September 15, 2014), and the Statement of the President of the UN Security Council in support of Iraq (September 19, 2014). They further noted the need for continued international support in response to the letter of September 20, 2014 from the Government of Iraq to the United Nations requesting international assistance to counter ISIL/Daesh. These documents provide a foundational record for a united global response against ISIL/Daesh, and are incorporated herein for reference. The participants further welcomed bilateral assistance for the Government of Iraq with equipment and/or training to support it in its fight against ISIL/Daesh as called for in the aforementioned UN Security Council documents.

7. Participants particularly welcomed the intervention of Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi, who outlined his Government's plan to defeat ISIL/Daesh through a combination of security, political, and economic measures. Participants also welcomed the attendance by Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ja'afri and Defense Minister Khalid Obeidi. Participants offered full support to the Government of Iraq and welcomed its national program, which seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of all components of Iraqi society. In this regard, they commended the efforts of Iraqi leaders to re-engage all Iraqi communities in the democratic process and to mobilize local populations to defend and protect their territories from ISIL/Daesh and other extremist groups in coordination with the Government of Iraq. Participants noted the Government of Iraq's commitment to continue in its efforts towards security sector reform, decentralization, and good governance. Participants further welcomed the cooperation between the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and noted the necessity of cooperation between all Iraqi communities in the campaign to defeat ISIL/Daesh.

8. Participants reiterated their support for the UN role in Iraq, in particular the mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Participants welcomed the briefing from Nickolay Mladenov, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Iraq and Head of UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI). Participants took special note of Mr. Mladenov's description of the humanitarian dimension to the situation in Iraq and the need for an organized international response to support UN agencies, the Government of Iraq, and the Kurdistan Regional Government in their efforts to manage the crisis.

9. Participants noted with great alarm the systematic and widespread human rights abuses committed by ISIL/Daesh including, inter alia, crimes against religious and ethnic minority groups and other vulnerable populations. In this regard, participants noted ISIL/Daesh's systematic use of sexual and gender-based violence in its campaign of terror, and encouraged international efforts addressing these crimes.

10. Participants decided to continue coordinating and monitoring progress along the lines of effort and ensure synchronization and unity of effort as the world unites to address the common threat of ISIL/Daesh. Coalition partners also decided to meet regularly for the purposes of political consultation and for overall coordination in order to synchronize policy, strategy, and resources. Future gatherings of this nature would occur at the ministerial and/or sub-ministerial levels. Subsequent gatherings of this ministerial-level plenary will take place as often as needed, and no later than within 180 days.

11. Participants noted with growing concern the suffering of the Syrian people. They urged all Syrian parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law and to facilitate humanitarian access to those in need, in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions 2139 and 2165. They took note of the recent UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry's report, Rule of Terror: Living under ISIS in Syria, which documents atrocities including "war crimes and crimes against humanity" being committed by ISIL/Daesh against the civilian population in Syria. Participants further confirmed their commitment to supporting the Syrian people in their efforts to confront ISIL/Daesh, and to a political transition process based on the principles of the Geneva Communiqué. They also welcomed UN Special Envoy Staffan De Mistura's efforts towards a political process. A number of participants specifically noted the need for effective ground forces to ultimately defeat ISIL/Daesh, and, in this regard, commended the actions of the moderate opposition forces fighting against ISIL/Daesh in Syria. These participants also called for increased support to these moderate opposition forces, which are fighting on multiple fronts against ISIL/Daesh, Al Nusrah Front, and the Syrian regime.

12. Participants expressed their deep concern at the continued suffering of those displaced by fighting, and underlined the need to improve access to help those in need. Participants undertook to take further measures to supplement UN efforts to address the crisis in Iraq, as well as the refugee crisis in Syria and countries hosting refugees from Syria. In this regard, they commended the hospitality of countries hosting refugees from Syria, notably Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and noted the heavy burden for these countries and the need to help increase the resilience of the host communities. They expressed support for Germany's efforts to draw attention to the need to provide assistance to communities hosting Syrian refugees in support of regional stability through the October 28 Conference on the Syrian Refugee Situation, and stressed that appropriate support to host countries and host communities is vital to counter-radicalization. They further pledged their full support for the Government and people of Iraq in their efforts to help and assist refugees and displaced persons and enable them to return to their homes.